# AN INDIAN PRIESTESS

## *The Life of Chundra Lela*

By ADA LEE

Fiction
Biography

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An Indian Priestess

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# AN INDIAN PRIESTESS:
# CHUNDRA LELA

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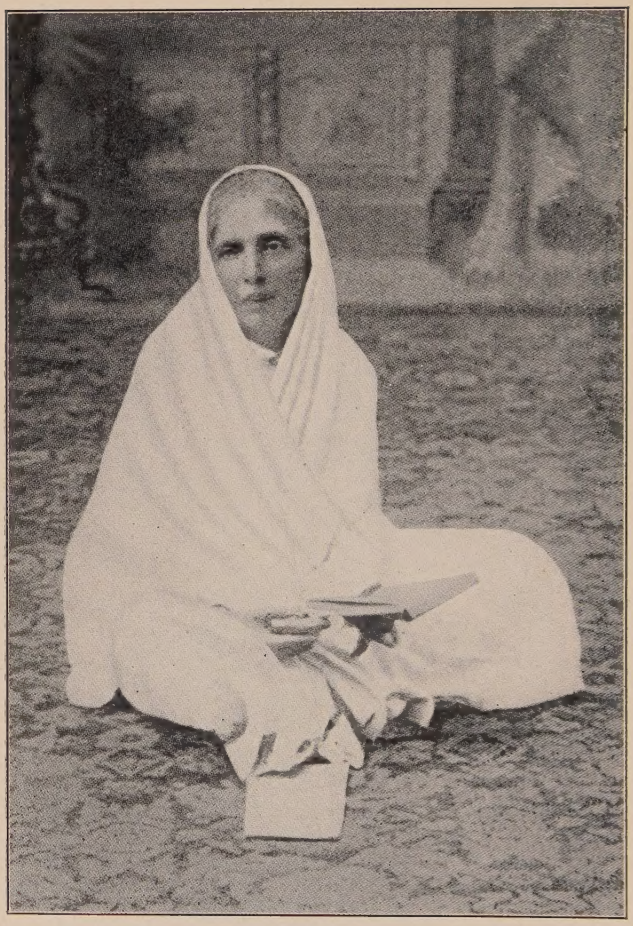

CHUNDRA LELA

# An Indian Priestess

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By ADA LEE

With Introduction by
THE RT. HON. LORD KINNAIRD

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# Foreword

On Wellington Square, Calcutta, stands one of the buildings of India which one does not easily forget. It is the Lee Memorial Home. Its central location, its height, its broad verandahs, its ample interior rooms, its wide roof warrant the investment of the two hundred and sixty-five thousand rupees that it cost. From the roof can be seen the other centres of mission work, the outstanding buildings of a great city, the innumerable, intricate roofs of Mohammedan harems, and beyond, the native city. The lesson of the Home is in the faith of those whose prayers have become crystallized into its walls; its chief charm is the three hundred and more girls who, otherwise destitute and homeless, find here a refuge, an education, a revelation of the love of Christ, and a preparation for the life of ministry. They stood, one bright day in February,



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1915, on either side of the broad stairway, rank upon rank, singing and smiling their greeting to us, a party of well-wishers from the other side of their world. We, at least, shall ever remember the hospitality which expressed itself in that living garland of color and that melodious spiral of song. Back of it all we could see that tragedy of Darjeeling, which swept away from the arms of Dr. and Mrs. Lee their six darling children, making room for these hundreds of other little ones, of whom the very least is one of the Saviour's own.

The story of the Home and of the missionary activities which it shelters centres in the life history of its founders. Mrs. Ada Lee had served a spiritual apprenticeship in the hardships of honest poverty among the hills of West Virginia, in the struggle for an education, and in the waiting years before she was sent out as a missionary to India by the Union Missionary Society. After five years of devoted service she married the Rev.

David H. Lee, of the Methodist Episcopal Mission, and together for two years more they remained on the field. At the end of seven years in India, Mr. Lee's health failed and they were obliged to return home.

After years of Christian work in the home field, Mr. and Mrs. Lee with their six children went out to India. They had awakened interest, made friends, and secured resources and, while holding a close connection with the Bengal Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, worked independently. The Darjeeling disaster took away their children, but neither their trust nor their devotion. Faith deepened and plans broadened. Out of the wreck and disorder God has enabled these servants of His to give to Calcutta and to all India these schools of training, these homes of mercy.

It is little wonder that under the hand of Mrs. Ada Lee the Life of *An Indian Priestess, Chundra Lela,* has become a

human document of extraordinary significance in the annals of Christian Missions.

Frank Mason North, D. D.

# Introduction

THE remarkable life-story recorded in this book, the long and weary search for Peace, the utter failure of Hinduism to help, and the glad reception of the True Light—are graphically told. The story is of the deepest interest, and is full of encouragement for workers in the Mission Field.

It should greatly strengthen the conviction of all who believe that if a country is to be won for Christ, it must be by means of native workers. What a hopeful prospect would there not be for India, if many such native converts as Chundra Lela were gathered to the Church!

This story also appears to indicate clearly that amongst the best and most useful workers in heathen lands will be those who understand the people's be-



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liefs, and have spent their lives in their midst.

I trust this wonderful life will be read by many of our young workers, and act as an inspiration.

KINNAIRD.

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# Life-Sketch of the Author

THE writer of this wonderful biography, Mrs. Ada Lee, was born among the hills of West Virginia, of poor, but hard-working parents. Thirsting for education, she would walk willingly day after day in deep snow, over a rough road, to the nearest schoolhouse; but the instruction received here did not satisfy her. To make college education possible, a visiting relative offered to take her to Ohio, where, at the age of fourteen, she worked for her board while pursuing her studies.

During the revival of 1873, the great turning-point came in her life. After days of spiritual agony, a wondrous deliverance came—changing darkness into light, slavery of sin into glorious liberty, and the timid, unhappy girl into a rejoicing child of God—eager to do His will



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and yet shrinking at first from obeying His voice, which seemed to say, "Go thou to India." The years of study passed—a time of testing followed, and then God opened the way. Accepted by the Union Missionary Society (the first Women's Society in America), "the happiest soul the sun ever shone upon," to use the writer's own words, stepped on board the steamer bound for India, on November 4th, in the Centennial year of the U. S. A.

After five years of faithful missionary service in that land, in which God permitted her to see some fruit, she married Rev. David H. Lee of the Methodist Episcopal Mission, and for two years they worked unitedly for the salvation of souls. Then his health failed, obliging them to return home, and a wee baby with them.

In the years that followed, while attending faithfully to the work entrusted to them by the Home Church, Mrs. Lee's heart longed for India as a fish longs for water. The Bengali people would be pleaded for whenever opportunity offered.

The Lord blessed her efforts, individuals became interested.

With the assurance that God meant her to persevere, Mrs. Lee set to work to obtain a fund of $20,000 (£4,000). In October, 1894, with the required sum in hand, and accompanied by six children, Mr. and Mrs. Lee started for India once more, Calcutta being their destination, where they had been working independently of any Society, though in connection with the M. E. Church. Their six beautiful children perished in the Darjeeling disaster, but this great sorrow has in no way diminished their enthusiastic zeal in the service of the Gospel.

After their great bereavement the blessing of God continued to rest on the labors of Mr. and Mrs. Lee. The Mission premises were in the early days small and confined. The missionaries were led, therefore, to plan an important extension, which should be a memorial of the children so strikingly called to the eternal Home, and should at the same time

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provide a permanent centre for the institution. Step by step the way has been opened up, and the funds provided for the carrying out of this purpose. In the "Lee Memorial Home" there is now accommodation for over three hundred destitute girls, who are trained for Christian service; and many who have passed through the classes are now teaching in the training and day-schools, as well as under other missionaries. The class for women has grown from a small beginning, and has been the training ground for the Bible women employed by the Mission, and for a number of helpers doing good work elsewhere. The Orphanages have been equally fruitful in providing workers to open day-schools and to go out with the Gospel among the villages.

WILMA MORGAN.

*London.*

A HIGH CASTE GIRL

A LOW CASTE WOMAN

# An Indian Priestess: Chundra Lela

## I

### BIRTH, MARRIAGE, AND WIDOWHOOD

THREESCORE years ago, a little Brahmin girl was born in the mountainous country of Nepal, to whom was given the name of Chundra Lela (Playing of the Moon-beams).

Her father was a wealthy landowner, whose forefathers had been the family priests of the Raja[1] of Nepal for centuries, the first son in each family falling heir to this sacred and highest position in the kingdom. Her mother was the favorite of his four wives.

At the early age of seven, Chundra

[1] See Glossary at end.



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Lela was married, in great pomp and magnificence, to the only son of another branch of the priesthood, and in this marriage were centred all the hopes of the proud and bigoted family. But one sad day, two years later, came word from her father-in-law's house that her husband was dead, and their only hope of an heir was now blasted, and Chundra Lela, the most despised of all creatures, was a child-widow.

She remained in her father's house till she was thirteen years old, during which time she learned to read her own language, and also Sanskrit, the mother of all languages in India. Her father, being a learned man, was her teacher. At this age she went with her father on her first pilgrimage, a long and weary journey to Jagannath, a sacred shrine in the east of India. There her father met the same fate as that of many another pilgrim. He died suddenly, and, as he was dying, he called Chundra Lela, and said: "My child, I must leave you. Here is a

VILLAGE SCENE

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bunch of keys; when you reach home, open the chests and boxes to which they belong, and what you find is yours, left you by your husband."

She took the keys, and, with a sad heart, watched her father die. Soon his body was burned to ashes before her in that sacred spot, and then she was alone. Gloomy and cast down, she returned with some fellow-pilgrims to her own land.

She spent the following year in the close study of her sacred books. There she learned the dark, sad story of Hinduism. She read of the sacred places in India, and the promises made to those who visit them. Among others was the promise of pardon for the sin which had caused widowhood, by the performance of *Char dhom*, the visiting and worshipping at the four great shrines, situated at the four cardinal points of India.

She determined she would do this and everything else laid down in the sacred books of the Hindus.

She made herself a long, narrow bag, and going to her boxes, took out from them the gold which had been left her by her husband. Filling the bag, she bound it about her waist.

She took numbers of garments, and packed them into bundles. She then selected two trusty maid-servants, and confided to them her secret, portraying to them the blessings eternal which would come to them if they would take their journey with her. This they consented to do. Her two brothers and sisters, with her stepmother, were asleep in the house on that night—the night this young girl stole away, and began that awful journey in search of God.

They were seven days crossing the rugged mountains to the plains below. There being no railway, she walked until tired, and then, to rest her, would hire a bullock-cart, or *ecka*, for awhile. But, walking along the road or riding, she counted her sacred beads, and repeated incantation after incantation, which she

had memorized from the Vedas and other sacred books.

She bathed in every sacred river, and worshipped at every shrine on her way, making offerings to the idols, and giving gifts to the Brahmin priests. On the way to the first of the four great shrines she visited Calcutta, worshipping at Kalighat (the great temple from which Calcutta is named), and bathed in the Ganges. The temple stands on the banks of what used to be the Ganges River, but the stream has shifted, leaving a long distance away the old bed, which is filled with water daily from the rising tide. This is the most sacred shrine in Bengal, and is visited by many thousand pilgrims yearly. The main temple was built about three centuries ago, and was not affected in the least by the late earthquake. The image of the goddess is hideous in the extreme. She has a black face with a protuding tongue covered with blood, and is adorned with a necklace of skulls. She is called the " Bloody

Goddess," and many goats and kids are sacrificed to her daily by her worshippers. On the regular festival days the drain about the temple is said to flow full with the blood of her victims. The gloom and filth of the place; the rude clamor of the priests; the naked, besmeared bodies of her devotees; the quivering, bleeding bodies of the newly-sacrificed animals; the sad bleating of the kids being led to the block—are sights and sounds the visitor can never forget. At one time human sacrifice was offered to this goddess, and Thugs of India used to whet their knives before her and ask her blessing on their murderous deeds. Chundra Lela had travelled this route with her father the year before. This time, as then, she fell in with many fellow-pilgrims on their way to the same place. She saw many suffering from disease and hunger, dropping out of the way; not a few to die, away from loved ones, and without reaching the goal on which was centred their every hope. To

these sights she had become somewhat accustomed, yet her young heart often sank within her; still she trudged on, till at last, footsore and weary, she came in sight of the world-renowned temple of Jagannath.

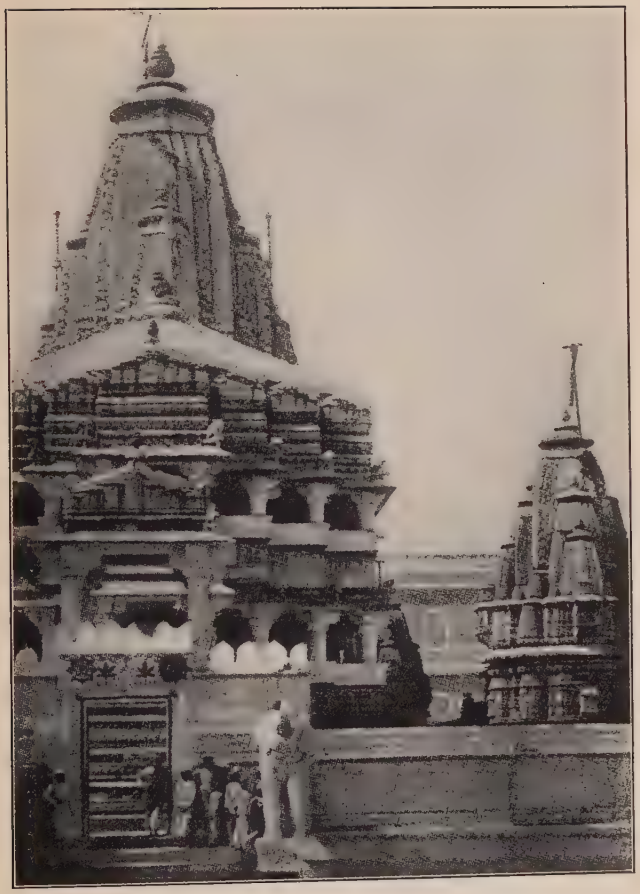
## II

### THE TEMPLE OF JAGANNATH

This large and renowned temple is situated in the country of Orissa, on the east coast of India, and is erected in honor of Jagannath, the lord of the world.

The word is from *jagat*, the world, and *nath*, lord. This is one of the ugliest gods in the Hindu pantheon. It is only a stump of a body, having no legs and only parts of arms.

The head, eyes, and mouth are tremendous and out of proportion. The origin of Jagannath, according to one account, is this: The whole coast of Orissa was formerly one dense jungle, inhabited by wild beasts. In the centre of this forest was a shrine, concerning which were fearful stories circulated; so much so, that no human being dared approach it.



THE TEMPLE OF JAGANNATH

A great king having heard these reports desired to visit the shrine, and sent a holy priest to prepare the way for him. On the arrival of the priest, to his astonishment, he found the jungle, shrine and all, had disappeared, and the entire place was covered with sand. The king was very sad at this, and thought it had been sent as a punishment for his undue curiosity ; and, fearing the anger of the god, began to worship him and offer sacrifices to appease his wrath. Being pleased with his devotion, the god appeared unto him and commanded him to build another temple in the place of the old one, and promised that the architect of the gods should himself come and make a new image, instead of the one that had disappeared.

The architect came and began his work, using the trunk of a *Nim* tree, under which the god Krishna had been killed by a hunter, and which tree had miraculously floated to the spot.

The architect declared if any one dis-

turbed him or looked upon his work before it was completed, he would leave the god in an unfinished condition. After waiting a fortnight, the curious king went to see the idol, whereupon the architect left off work, never to resume it again, and, consequently, the god had only stumps of arms and no feet. The king was greatly disturbed; but, procuring the bones of Krishna, and placing them within the body of the image, it became, in spite of its hideousness, one of the most famous gods in India.

The temple itself is magnificent. The ground for eighty miles around is called holy, and considered the residence of the gods. During the Jagannath festival innumerable pilgrims visit the spot from all over India. These poor, deluded creatures endure the greatest hardship, and multitudes die of starvation or disease on the way, and many more perish after they arrive at that dreadful place.

At the time of the festival the god is taken out of the temple, with the images

also of his brother and sister. They are drawn up by means of ropes fastened around their necks, and seated in an elevated position in the great car. The car is built in the form of a tower, sometimes thirty or forty cubits high, and covered with the most indecent, obscene pictures imaginable, upon which throngs of men, women, and innocent children gaze by the hour.

Immense ropes, of great length and thickness, are attached to this structure. Hundreds, and even thousands, of people lay hold of it, and draw it through the streets, amid the deafening shouts of the crowd. All are eager to lay hold of the rope. I have seen old, tottering women clamor for a place, where they may touch or even kiss it. It sometimes takes hours to start the cumbrous car in the rain and mud.

Those who draw it are besmeared with mud, and yell like demons; while others throw themselves in front of the car, or prostrate themselves in the mud beside it.

As the car first begins to move, the excitement of the people seems to be uncontrollable, and the shouting of the immense crowds is like the raging of madmen. And I have no doubt, if it were not for the police force at hand, many a fanatic would cast his child under the great wheels, and numbers of devotees give their bodies a sacrifice to this god, during this festival, now, as of yore. The sight fills one with indescribable horror.

To this, the first of the four great shrines, came Chundra Lela, and dwelt two weeks worshipping this hideous idol. She here gave a feast to the Brahmins, and a cow to supply them with milk. She twice made an offering to Jagannath, costing twenty-five rupees each time. After doing all required of her by their sacred rites here, she again started on her perilous journey to the next of the four great shrines which is situated in the extreme south of India, requiring many weary months of travel to reach it.

## III

### THE TEMPLE OF RAMANATH

The second of the great shrines of India is Ramanath, near Ceylon, on a small island not far from Madura. The temple stands on a rising ground in the northern part of the island, in a quadrangular inclosure about six hundred feet long and one hundred and fifty-seven feet broad, and is entered by a gateway one hundred feet high. The glory of the temple is its corridors, or open galleries. They extend to a total length of nearly four thousand feet. Their breadth varies from twenty to thirty feet, and their height is about thirty feet. Some stones forty feet long are used in doorways and roofs. The temple was probably built during the seventeenth century.

The *Linga*, a round stone worshipped by the Hindus, is supposed to have been



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placed here by Ram. It is washed with Ganges water, which is afterwards sold to the pilgrims.

The temple is situated on the spot where Ram, with the aid of Hanuman and his army of monkeys, is said to have bridged the strait between India and the island of Ceylon, when on his way to rescue his beautiful wife, Sita. This story is found in the Ramayan, one of the most popular books of the Hindus.

Ram was the son of a king, who, having a number of wives, had many heirs to his throne. But Ram, being a favorite of his father and the people, was made king. This, as is usually the case, was the cause of great strife. But, being a very holy person, to save trouble he vacated the throne, and fled with his lovely wife, Sita, to live as a hermit in the forest.

This beautiful woman was the envy of gods and men, and many were the efforts made to entice her away from her hermit husband. But she was as true to

him as devotion itself, and served him as her god.

One of Ram's rivals was the great Ravana, the king of Ceylon. Taking the form of a mendicant, one day he came to their hut, after Ram had been enticed to leave her by a deer coming within arrow-shot of him. Missing it, he was compelled, through hunger and great necessity, to follow on in the chase. He first placed his wife within a charmed circle, telling her no harm could come to her within its boundary.

Soon after the disappearance of Ram, the mendicant came to her begging rice. The people never dare refuse these religious beggars, so she felt she must give to him if even it did necessitate her stepping beyond the charmed circle. As soon as she did the mendicant assumed his real form, and snatching the long-coveted woman in his arms, and seating her beside him in his air chariot, took her away to his palace in Ceylon.

Ram returned, and finding his devoted

wife gone began to weep and mourn as no human could, until we are told, "All nature, both birds and beasts, sympathized with him in his grief, and the very earth shook with his moans."

Hanuman, the monkey-god, was the first to meet and comfort Ram. He told him he saw the king of Ceylon escaping with Sita, and that he would go and find her. Ram delivered to his friend a message to carry to Sita, and his signet-ring to deliver to her as a token of his love and faithfulness.

The monkey took his journey, and reaching the southern extremity of India, leaped the channel, and arriving in Ceylon, proceeded to the king's palace. Assuming the form of a rat, he crept under the walls into Sita's chamber, and delivered to her the signet-ring and Ram's message.

Receiving her messages in return, which were avowals of her faithfulness to Ram, he again crept under the walls to the outer court where he resumed his

former self, ready for his return journey. The people of Ceylon, seeing the performance, arrested him as a spy, and proceeded to try him in court before the king. They treated him with every indignity, not even offering him a seat, whereupon he coiled up his tail, as a sailor would a rope, and sat down on it.

He answered the king in such a shrewd and comical way as to cause roars of laughter in the assembly. Finally the king appealed to his counsellors for their opinion as to a proper mode of punishing such an invader. One very wise one among them suggested that a torch, covered with pitch, be tied to his tail and fire set to, and he be let go.

This was agreed to by all present, and the verdict executed on Mr. Monkey.

As the torch began to burn, the monkey ran up and down their rice-fields setting fire to the ripened grain. He then ascended the houses, and springing from building to building, set fire to their thatched roofs. When all was

ablaze, he took his tail between his hands, put out the fire, and then clapped his smutty hands to his face, and made it black; and from that day to this, the gray monkey with a black face and a long tail, the tip of which is black, roams all over India, the object of worship by millions of benighted people.

On Hanuman's return, he gathered his army of monkeys, and, led by Ram, proceeded to Ceylon, to rescue and bring back the beautiful queen Sita. The strait between India and Ceylon was bridged by monkeys tearing down the mountains and casting them into the sea, until Ram and his devoted followers crossed over dry-shod. After a severe battle, Sita was saved and restored to her husband. Such is the story believed in by all orthoxox Hindus to-day. The temple of Ramanath stands on this sacred spot, and is visited by millions of deluded but sincere worshippers of this, their favorite god.

After months had crept into years,

Chundra Lela had at last reached the second of the four shrines, and here worshipped Ram ten days, and gave a great feast to the Brahmins, and a cow to supply milk for Ramanath. She also purchased a small image of Ram which she carried with her in all her wanderings, adoring him as her special god.

From hence she proceeded on her weary march, sacred beads in her hands, worshipping with all her blind devotion the only gods she knew.

## IV

### SORROW AND SUFFERING BY THE WAY

Travel in those days was exceedingly difficult, but nothing could thwart Chundra Lela in her purpose. So on she journeyed day after day, until at last she came to the third famous temple, Dwarakanath, in the extreme west of India. Dwaraka, the city of gates, is situated on the western coast of the Kathiawa peninsula. The Puranas say this city was built by Krishna. It was defended by high ramparts, and contained many beautiful gardens and ponds of water. This is the scene of the sports and sinful doings of Krishna, the vilest god in the Hindu pantheon. The Hindus believe that the temple was raised in one night by some miraculous power. It consists of a shrine, a spacious audience hall, the roof of which is supported by sixty granite and

sandstone pillars, and a conical spire one hundred and seventy feet in height. The body of the temple has five stories, the height being one hundred feet. It is said that on the day Krishna died the sea arose and submerged the whole city, except this sacred temple. The sea has never been able to wash it away.

It is not to be wondered at that millions of pilgrims visit this place, when it is written of it, "Whoever visits that holy shrine, the place where Krishna pursued his sports, is liberated from all sin."

Here Chundra Lela painted her body with sandal wood, and remained fifteen days worshipping in the temple. She gave a feast and money to all the Brahmins and fakirs. From here she proceeded to the last of the four great shrines, Badrinath, in the extreme north of India. This is a temple in honor of Vishnu, the god of preservation, and the figure of the deity is said to have been taken from the bottom of the river Alak-

nanda, one of the principal tributaries of the Ganges. The temple consists of a conical building surmounted by a copper dome which ends in a golden ball. It is situated high up amid the snows of the Himalaya range, ten thousand four hundred feet above the level of the sea. The sacred mount on which it stands, Badrinath, with its twin sister, Kedranath, near by, charms the eye of every traveller passing over that beautiful mountain route from Naini Tal to Mussoorie.

Oh, if those grand old peaks could tell all they know of human suffering—of the many longing hearts who have come for comfort, to find only suffering and death amid the very snows which so delight the artist's eye! Chundra Lela, with expectant heart but weary body, reached the base of this sacred mount. She and her two faithful companions began its ascent. Soon their bare feet became numb with cold, and cut and bleeding with the snow and ice. Here she gathered all the old clothes she could

from her bundles, and they wrapped their poor, bleeding feet with layer after layer, and proceeded on their way nothing daunted, although the air became more piercing every hour. Half dead, they crept along the still more dangerous path, clinging to projecting ice, frozen rocks, and crags, until she touched the sacred spot. For five days she stayed, until she felt the god could require no more suffering of mortal than she had endured. They then began their weary descent, but Chundra Lela's heaviest burden was her sad and disappointed heart. Seven years had passed since she left her home and began this weary march in search of God, and had not found Him yet. Lest she might leave something undone, she climbed to the temple on Kedranath, and sprinkled the idol with Ganges water which she had carried with her for the purpose.

From here she hasted as best she could down to the foot of the mountains again, to the noted place of pilgrimage, Hard-

war. This is the spot where the Ganges River issues from the mountainside. The Shastras say that this sacred river was originally only in heaven, but, through the prevailing prayers of a certain sage, the river was permitted to flow to the earth. Gunga was angry at being brought down from heaven, and Siva, to save the earth from the shock of her fall, stood upon the mountain and caught Gunga in his bunch of matted hair, and detained her there for awhile, after which one drop was permitted to fall on the mountain ; and from this sprang the most sacred river of the world, to which the millions of India resort to wash away their sins. The special attraction at Hardwar is the bathing ghat with the adjoining temple. The foot-mark of Vishnu, cut on a stone in the upper wall of the ghat, is an object of special reverence. Many pilgrims are crushed to death by treading on one another in their attempts to reach the spot and be first to plunge in the water afterwards. Police guard is necessary, to pre-

vent many thus being crowded and drowned. The first day of the Hindu New Year is the supposed anniversary of the day when the Ganges first appeared upon earth. There is always a great gathering on this day. Chundra Lela bathed here with the rest, and saw such sights of wretchedness and suffering among those who had come for the same purpose as she, that her naturally brave but tender heart almost sank within her. On she went towards Kashmir, visiting all places of sacred legend, worshipping at every shrine, and feeding the Brahmins everywhere She came back and visited Muttra, and looked upon the spot spoken of in her sacred books, where the god Krishna held the mountain on his finger, but saw and heard nothing that gave her soul relief. On she came to Allahabad, and bathed in the spot where the Jumna and the Ganges unite their sacred waters.

Here she remained through the *Mela*, lasting a month, bathing and worshipping every day. While there she visited the

underground temple, worshipped the idol, and carried away leaves from the trees, which she was told grew in the midst of the temple under the earth, in the darkness, whose leaves were to heal the sick. This tree, unknown to the pilgrims, is carried in fresh every few days by the priests in the night-time, and the poor, superstitious worshippers are made to believe it grew there.

Chundra Lela daily read her Shastras, and followed their direction in all she did. On she went, down the sacred Ganges, until she arrived at Benares, the sacred city of the Hindus. There she worshipped Siva, the god of destruction, and made the prescribed offering of the following articles to the head Brahmin : An umbrella, a bed-cover, a bed, a plate, a lamp and drinking-cup, an earthen pot, a vessel for sprinkling idols, sandals, and a cow. She cast her offering of flowers upon the Ganges River, and watched them float away with myriads of other such offerings, which caused the bosom of the river

READING OF THE SHASTRAS

to look like one vast floating flower garden, leaving behind them nothing but blackness of darkness in Chundra Lela's heart. She spent several days bathing and worshipping in the many and various shrines of that wonderful seat of idolatry. She visited also the birthplace of Ram, where she spent a month worshipping this, her favorite idol. Here she was shown, in the temple, what they claimed were the cooking utensils of Sita, Ram's wife. Near this place one of her faithful maid-servants took cholera and died. Chundra Lela did everything she knew to save her life, but to no avail. The police burned the body and all the clothes. A short time after the other companion died in the same way, and she was alone, and brought water and did her own cooking for the first time in her life.

She now became more dejected and sad. She did not know what to do next. Seven years had passed since she left her home and began this pilgrimage.

While undecided as to what to do, a

party of pilgrims passed her way one day. She asked them where they were going, and they said to Jagannath.

"Let me join your band and go on with you. I am all alone." They told her their way lay through a dense forest, and great would be their suffering before they would reach the other side. Still she went, and suffered with them many hardships. The gold she had brought with her was growing less, as from it she had made expensive offerings, and had fed herself and her companions all these years. She ate none of the things which were given to other pilgrims, such was her independent spirit.

# V

## AS A FAKIR

One day they arrived at a place, the residence of the king, twenty miles from Midnapore. There the king had built a resting-place for pilgrims, and every day he sent them gifts of rice, *dal*, and *ghee*. As they stopped to rest, Chundra Lela sat reading her Shastras, when the king's servant came to distribute food, which offering she refused, saying, "I eat my own, not what belongs to others." The servant, amazed, returned to the king, saying that all had taken, excepting a woman who sat reading her sacred books. The king sent for her, and she was ushered into the presence of the queen and her maids of honor.

"From whence have you come?" they inquired; "and why did you refuse the food we sent?"

"My home is in Nepal," she replied; "and my father was the family priest to the king of Nepal. I pay my own way and buy my own food."

"Why have you come all this distance?" again they asked.

"I am trying to find God, and deliverance from sin," she said. She then related her history in the presence of the king and queen, who were greatly moved by her story of the sufferings she had undergone during the years of pilgrimage. "And all this I have endured in the hope of finding God."

Then the king said: "You are the same as the daughter of our own family priest, and therefore as our own daughter. Stop with us, and cease your wandering. Be our family priestess."

She remained, and the king built her a house, and gave her servants, and she became one of the king's household, teaching the women Sanskrit, and reading the sacred books to them, and performing worship for them. At the same time she

learned to read Bengali and Oriya with the king's steward. She was held in holy reverence by all; even the king and queen bowed down and worshipped her, morning and evening. Thus, in luxury and adoration, she lived seven years, when the king and his first queen died, and the eldest son came to the throne. She was now twenty-eight years old, and in all her ceaseless efforts to appease the wrath of the gods she had found no rest nor the peace for which her heart was craving. She decided on another and last resort; so, telling the new king a falsehood, to get away, leading him to believe she was going back to her country, she bade them farewell, the king giving her twenty-five rupees as she left.

Instead of going to her country, Chundra Lela began her pilgrimages again. This time she was determined to spend three years in bodily torture, doing herself every cruelty enjoined in the sacred books of the Hindus as pleasing to their gods.

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She travelled to Ramgunge, and there joined the fakirs, becoming one of their number. Each selected his own mode of penance, or self-torture. Some were lying on beds of spikes ; others buried in the sand ; still others lying over smoking wood ; some had held their arms in an upright position until the flesh had withered and dried on the bone, and the unkempt finger-nails had grown several inches in length, piercing through the flesh or winding about the shrivelled and distorted hand. Chundra Lela smeared her body with ashes, and painted her face red and white, after their hideous manner. Her long, beautiful hair was besmeared with cowdung, then drawn up in a horrible way, and fastened in a knot on top of her head. She clothed herself in a *doty*. About her neck she wore a long string of large beads, and on her feet she put wooden sandals. A deerskin became her only bed. In her hand she carried iron pincers, with which to perform the sacrificial work before the idols.

SHE VOWED TO SIT SIX HOT MONTHS

Thus equipped, she vowed to sit, during the six hot months of the year, on the deerskin all day in the burning sun, with five fires built about her. And thus she sat, day after day, while sweat ran from every pore of her body. In addition to this torture, at night she stood on one foot, with the other drawn up against it, her hands pressed together before the idol, she remaining in this attitude, imploring the god to reveal himself unto her, from twelve at night until daylight. Thus, as a fakir, she went from one sacred shrine to another, remaining three months in a place. She was worshipped by rich and poor. Wealthy men brought the wood, and kept the fire burning about her, thinking it a great act of merit on their part.

During the cold season, instead of standing on one foot, she spent the night sitting in a pond, with water up to her neck, counting her beads from dark until daylight.

When Chundra Lela told this part of

her story to us, she said, " Mem, nobody knows how long those nights were, nor how I suffered before morning. The string contained one hundred and eight beads. With each bead I called on the name of a god; with the other hand I kept account of the number of times I had gone around the string by moving the thumb from joint to joint, as is their way of counting. In a night I would go round the string one thousand times, repeating the name of the gods one hundred and eight thousand times. I would look towards the East for the first ray of light, and wonder if the night would ever end. When day broke, I would crawl out of the water as best I could with my benumbed limbs, and, prostrating my body on the ground, would then measure my length to the spot where I was to sit all day, worshipping idols. I often slept in a sitting position. Thus I called upon Ram day and night, with no response. All this I endured just to find God."

A FAKIR

During these three years she never tasted salt nor rice nor grain of any kind, but lived on fruit alone which she carried with her when travelling. She used to plead with the idol before her: "If thou art God, reveal thyself to me. Reach forth and take the offering I bring. Let me see, hear, or feel something by which I may know I have pleased thee, and that my great sin is pardoned and I accepted by thee." But as yet there was no sign, no rest, no peace.

## VI

### AWFUL DECEPTION OF HINDUISM DISCLOSED

At a place called Moorshedabad, Chundra Lela was seated, surrounded by the five fires, worshipping the idols before her, and great throngs, as they passed by, were bowing down to her and kissing the ashes from her feet. In the throng came the Queen of Manipur, from Assam, and also worshipped her. She learned that some of the queen's people were returning to Assam. There were sacred places in Assam she had often read of in the Shastras, and she had determined to go there too. She requested the queen to grant her petition to go with the servants of the royal family, which the queen did, giving her a letter to her son in Assam, telling him to care for her and send her on her journey.

This necessitated travelling by boat several days, during which time she had continued sitting surrounded by fires burning in earthen pots, thus not allowing anything to interfere with the fulfillment of her vow. She was received with reverence by the king's son, and remained with them fifteen days. He sent her on her way to the great shrines of the country with recommendations to different officials in the land. She bathed in the Brahmaputra. At one noted shrine Chundra Lela was told by the priest that, on a certain day in the year, blood would flow from the idol into which he dipped a cloth, and whoever was present on that day and received a piece of the cloth to carry away with them, would have their desire, whatever it might be. She determined to stay until that day and see for herself, and get this desirable boon, although it necessitated her remaining six months. She continued her self-torture as before, and also made feasts for the virgin daughters

of the Brahmins, and made gold offerings to the idol.

On the appointed day Chundra Lela went early in the morning to the temple to worship, and to wait for the appearance of the flowing blood. The priest tried to get rid of her, telling her it was too early in the day, and to come when he should summon the rest. She went away, only to return sooner than she was wanted, and caught the priest dipping the cloth, not into the blood which had flowed from the idol, but into that of a goat he had killed for the purpose. Many hundred pilgrims that day received the mystical cloth, believing the lie the priest told, and paying the fee; but Chundra Lela would not receive it. She was thoroughly disgusted with this deception, and began, from that day, to search for more fallacies in the system. These priests had also told her if she had made their daughters a promise and went away without performing it, a tiger would come out of the jungle on her way and tear her to pieces.

She determined to prove this also. She said:

"I told a lie in order to find out whether the statement made by the Brahmin priests was true or false. I went to two of their daughters, and told them I would give them each a set of *choories*, and a new cloth or dress. I went away without doing it, thinking I can but perish, anyway. As I went out of the city on my way, I came to the lonely road that led through the jungle. I kept watching for the tiger to leap upon me. Every stir made my blood run cold. I went on and on, but the tiger never came. I then began to believe the priests to be a set of liars instead of holy men."

From here she went into another Raja's territory to the next shrine. Only those who were able to make special offerings were permitted to visit the shrine. The most costly and acceptable offerings that could be given she gave to the king, which were a lump of salt and a bit of opium. The common people in India

could not afford to use salt in those days. The shrine was Purshoo Ram, the place where the god Ram had murdered his mother. They showed her the block on which she was beheaded, and she covered it with flowers and worshipped there. Here Chundra Lela was disgusted with the greediness of the Brahmin priests. After she had given them the usual offering, they caught the garment she wore about her, and, cutting it in two, took half of it from her. She was glad to escape with her life.

She had read in their sacred books of the death of Parvati, the wife of Siva. Her father had made a great feast to which he invited all his sons-in-law and great personages, excepting Siva. Parvati was so heart-broken at the indignity shown her husband that she refused to attend herself. During the feasting there was a great fire burning in the court-yard, into which Parvati threw herself, whereupon her husband, Siva, appeared on the scene, and thrusting his spear into

her burning body, flew through space with it, and, as he went, parts of the body fell to the earth, and each place which received a portion of the body became sacred. Thus Hindu mythology teaches suicide, murder, and every other vice common to man, as practiced by the gods they worship. Chundra Lela had read of this place in Assam where Parvati's eye was said to have fallen to the earth, and having alighted in the centre of a small lake, had become a bright, burning light. She was determined to see this phenomenon for herself. She travelled a long distance, and, on reaching the place, was shown a pond, sure enough, with a light shining on the bosom of the water. The priest told her this was Parvati's eye.

She walked all about the lake, looking at the light, and wondered how an eye could burn like that in the water. She determined to hide herself, and see what came of the light. A little while after dark, she saw the priest come down and

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enter a boat, and go out to the centre of the pond, and replenish the oil in the little lamp, that was so arranged as to be held just above the top of the water. She then lost faith, not only in the priests, but also in the teaching of the Shastras, and yet continued their practice. She remained in Assam the three months of the hot weather, sitting, as before, all day in the hot sun, with five fires burning around her. In the performance of this, her sacred books promised her whatever she desired of God.

At the end of this time she desired to return to Calcutta. A wealthy native gentleman paid her way by ship. The captain did not wish to take her on board, covered, as she was, with filth and ashes, and having with her earthen vessels and wood for her fires. He told her she would have to pay more than the ordinary fare. She paid the amount he named, and was allowed to embark. On the way they had a great storm. The water dashed over the vessel so that they

were in imminent danger, and many thought they would be drowned. The Hindus began to cry out, "Ram, Ram, save us!" Chundra Lela joining them, making a great noise. The captain came on deck, and, seeing their confusion, commanded them to be quiet, and pointing to heaven, said, "Hush! He who lives there will care for us." This was the first time she had ever heard of there being a God other than the idols she worshipped. Soon after the storm ceased, which made a profound impression upon her that she never forgot.

She landed in Calcutta, remaining there a week, bathing in the Ganges. She then bought a pony for Rs. 9, and, putting all her traps upon it, started for Midnapore, forty miles away. Arriving here, she remained sitting in the midst of the fire, wearing her fakir garb and living only on fruit, until her three years were ended. She then went to Calcutta to bathe in the Ganges, and cut off her long, matted hair, which had not been combed nor cleaned

during the three years, and threw it, as an offering, into the river, saying, "There, I have done and suffered all that could be required of mortal, by god or man, and yet without avail!"

Oh those long, weary years of wandering! And yet the Great Father pitied His poor, benighted child, and would finally lead her through the dense darkness until, from the lips of one of His messengers, she should hear the Gospel, believe it, and find the Saviour she had for so many years been feeling after.

## VII

### BREAKING HER FETTERS

Chundra Lela returned to Midnapore, where she had gathered together a number of disciples. Among them was a little boy of whom she was very fond, and who had come to her in the following way: One day a woman came, and bowing down to her and kissing the ashes from her feet, said: "I have one great sorrow; I am childless, and my husband will marry another wife if I do not bear him a son. What offering can I make the gods by which I may obtain a son?" "I know not what offering will obtain for you this blessing, my sister," said Chundra Lela; "but I do know a root which is a medicine, not a charm; and if, through disease or physical weakness, you are barren, if you will take this medicine,

you will become well, and it may be you will become a mother."

The woman was pleased with the thought, and took the medicine, and in time became the happy mother of a son. This son was brought and dedicated to Chundra Lela, who taught him from his infancy. After her return, there was a native official who had often seen her sitting beside the road, engaged in worship, or teaching her disciples. This man's wife sent for her to come and read the Shastras to her. They were so pleased with her that the native gentlemen gave her a room for herself and her idols, which she had carried with her in all her wanderings. She here taught many women the Shastras and performed worship for them, although she herself had lost all faith in her idols. She also had access to the homes of many leading families, and spent her time in instructing her disciples in the sacred books of Hinduism. Finally Chundra Lela became so disgusted with it all that she gathered up her idols

A BENGALI CHILD-MOTHER

and carried them away to the house of a Boostrum, a caste rather low in the scale, and left them with the woman, saying: "You may worship these if you like; I have done them homage many long, weary years—all in vain. I will never worship them again. There is nothing in Hinduism, or I would have found it."

Into the home of her little disciple she went often. Soon his sister was married, and went to live in her father-in-law's house in another part of the city, which was near the Mission, which was the home of our late Dr. Phillips. His sister, Julia, was then a zenana worker of the American Free Baptist Mission, and taught this newly-married girl, whose name was Parbortee. One day Chundra Lela went to visit her, and found her reading Christian books, the first she had ever seen.

"Where did you get these books, Parbortee?" she asked.

"The lady who comes to teach me brought them," Parbortee answered.

"Could I see this lady?"

"You come to-morrow at three o'clock and you will see her. It is the day she comes to teach me."

"I will be sure to come."

Chundra Lela went, but something had prevented Miss Julia from going. An old Bible-woman and a young girl, Soorji, went in her stead. They were so struck with Chundra Lela, and her great desire to see the lady, that they came back and told Mrs. Phillips that they had seen a wonderful priestess who wished to hear them read. The next day both Mrs. Phillips and Miss Julia went to see her, and on that day from their lips Chundra Lela heard the Gospel for the first time. She asked them to teach her Bengali grammar, and bought a book of them. The ladies then handed her a Bible, told her it was our religious book, and asked her to read it. She paid them eight annas (8d.) for it, and took it home with her, and began to read it day and night. She gathered up a school for them, and

the missionary ladies, with their Christian helpers, taught her and the school. She was not satisfied with this, but soon began going to the Mission-house, where she might hear more about Jesus and this new religion. She was faithfully instructed, and soon began to love her Bible, so that she not only read it herself, but taught it to her disciples.

When they came to hear her read and expound the Ramayan and Shastras as before, she said, "I will not read these, but will read my new book to you."

"Why do you not read the old books to us?" they asked.

"Oh," said Chundra Lela, "this new book is a good book."

The women listened, delighted; but the men said: "What is this you are reading to us? Christian books? You are going to be a Christian. Don't go to the missionary's house any more. We will bring you a teacher who will teach you Bengali grammar in our house."

"No," she answered, "I will not read

with a pundit. I wish to go to the lady and learn of her."

They then threatened her, saying: "If you become a Christian we will all turn you out; and people will call you mad, and beat and stone you. The Christians will soon get tired of you, and throw you off. Then what will you do?"

"Jesus is God," she replied. "If I die for Him, I will be saved. I am not afraid. You people cannot hold me, and need not try. You yourselves ought to become Christians." She then began to tell them about Jesus, and explained the Gospel to the throngs that gathered about her.

After she had been taught two months, Chundra Lela told the missionaries she wished to become a Christian. One day, while she was in the Mission-house, Dr. Phillips and his father came into the room. The latter asked:

"What country are you from?"

"My home is in Nepal."

"Are you a saint or sinner?"

She answered: "My father and mother

A YOUNG BENGALI TEACHER

were born in sin, and I likewise. I have worshipped idols in all countries, and told many lies, and done many vain things. Can I say I am good?"

Dr. Phillips then asked: "You say you have worshipped all these idols; have you got pardon for your sin?"

"I have worshipped every idol I know. I have gone all pilgrimages, and done all the Hindu religion has taught; but I know nothing about pardon, and have had no peace," was the reply.

"Cannot your idols forgive sins?" continued Dr. Phillips. "If not, how will you get pardon?"

She answered: "I have now read about Jesus, and learn that He is the Saviour, and can save and pardon me. Believing this, I wish to become a Christian."

Miss Phillips then said: "You have seen many temples of Hindu gods, but have you ever seen our church?"

"No," she answered, "I have never been in a Christian temple. When can I come?"

"To-morrow afternoon we have service. Be sure to come." She then showed her the church.

Chundra Lela gives the following account of the first time she ever attended Christian worship:

"I went at the time appointed. My hair had grown again until it lay on my neck. I still wore the *doty*, with nothing covering my waist; but as I entered the church I drew the end of the cloth over my head and about my body. Dr. Phillips was in the pulpit. From his lips I heard my first sermon. Oh, what a sermon! While I sat listening, my heart was stirred within me, and I felt I had found that for which I had long sought. I wished to leave Hinduism, with all its cruel deceptions, and come out at once.

"After the service, Dr. Phillips and the native pastor came to see me. I said to the former, 'Sahib, I wish to be baptized.'

"He answered: 'When you become a Christian you will have great sorrow.

All will forsake you; and if you get no rice to eat, what will you do then?'

"I answered: 'God feeds the birds; will He not feed me? He who made the mouth, can He not put food into it? God will take care of me. I am not afraid!'

"He then heard my name for the first time. From the church I went back into my Hindu home, but could not sleep or rest. I would lie awake at night, wondering when I could leave all and become the Lord's."

For another week she continued learning. At the end of that time she went to Dr. Phillips, and told him that she wished to prepare to come away from her Hindu friends; that she had some money and brass vessels in the house of a friend some distance away, and asked if she had better go and get them. Dr. Phillips said to her: "I fear, if you go, Satan will say, 'Here, take this money and stay here,' and not let you come back any more."

"Then I will never go," said Chundra Lela.

She told him about the idols that she had carried in all her pilgrimages, and her Hindu books which she had stored away in the Boostrum's house, and Dr. Phillips sent an old woman with her to bring them away. She put them in her disciple's house where she was staying. They asked her if she intended to worship them that night; if that was why she had brought them? Her reply was, "No, I have left all that long ago."

These idols and books she afterwards made over to Dr. Phillips. Among them was the little image of Ram, which she had carried with her in all her journeyings and had worshipped incessantly all those years.

On a Tuesday morning, shortly after this, she gathered together all her belongings, and took them over to the native pastor's house. The news soon spread everywhere that she had gone,

and her disciples and many Hindus gathered together and went to persuade her, who so long had been their priestess and leader, to return to them. She went out on the veranda, and assured them she was no longer a Hindu, and could never teach Hinduism again. To prove to them that she meant what she said, she called the pastor's wife to bring her a cup of water, and, taking it from this Christian's hand, drank it before them. She then asked another Christian for his hookah, and sat down and smoked with the group of Christians, thus breaking her caste in the presence of those who had come to take her back. They went away saying, sorrowfully, "Now her caste is gone, she is nothing more to us." Chundra Lela smoked then, but has not since. For many years she has believed smoking and drinking intoxicants to be incompatible with a pure heart—a truth, I believe, every one filled with the Spirit will confirm.

A few days after, the Raja's son, in

whose palace she had been seven years, and who lived twenty miles away from Midnapore, hearing she had gone among Christians, sent an elephant on which to bring her away. Learning that she had broken caste, they returned without seeing her. Chundra Lela afterwards went to his palace, and preached Christ to them and taught him the Bible. He is now convinced of the truth, and would declare himself a Christian were it not for his people and position.

She lived a month with the native pastor's family, paying the woman who gave her food to eat five rupees. She spent much of this time in reading the Bible and studying the doctrines of the Christian faith.

On a day never to be forgotten by Chundra Lela, and a day many others have since praised the Lord for—she, in the presence of a number of people, was baptized by Dr. Phillips. No one could wish any greater honor than to have that sacred ordinance administered by such a

man; nor no greater privilege could any one covet than to administer the rite which made free from heathenism such a woman.

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## VIII

### MONEY-MAKING AND PREACHING

After her baptism, Chundra Lela was sent with the other workers to teach in the zenana and schools ; but she could not settle down to teach children their alphabet and women to read, but began to take the Bible and to preach from house to house, and in the streets, great throngs gathering to hear her. She scarcely stopped to eat or rest during the day. At night she would cook and eat her food. The missionaries, seeing this, set her apart for this work, and let her go where she liked. The first three years she spent in and about Midnapore, preaching everywhere. Two years after she became a Christian, her brother came with a number of people from Nepal on a pilgrimage to Jagannath. On his way he stopped to see Chundra Lela, and spent two weeks

with her, living and eating in a separate house, but drinking in from her the beautiful teachings of Jesus and His wonderful salvation. Dr. Phillips gave him a Bible. He also attended services in the church, and then returned home.

Chundra Lela spent some time in the work, going out on short journeys, when she conceived the plan of going to Moorshedabad, where she had gone before as a pilgrim, and lived among the people, preaching Christ where she used to worship idols. She started, and, in some places, remained a month at a time, preaching and teaching the pilgrims who came and went. In one place where she wished to remain a month, she found she was likely to fall short of money; so she invested four dollars in wood and mangoes, and set up a little shop under a peepul-tree, which she also made her preaching-stand, thinking she would preach and sell her goods too, and thus make enough to keep her in food. She would begin to preach, and a crowd would gather about

her, and she would become so interested in what she was telling the people that she forgot all about her wood and mangoes, and they would steal them and run away. When she had sold the remainder she found, that instead of any profit, she had lost on the investment. She decided that the Lord did not wish her to sell wood and mangoes for a living, but, if she would trust Him, He would take care of her. Often, after she had been preaching for hours, the kind-hearted people would come and ask her if she was hungry, and bring her food.

She tells of one time, when she had been travelling through a jungle, over rough and almost impassable roads, with nothing to eat or drink but the sap of a plant that she found on the way. At evening-time she came out into a little village, tired and hungry, but sat down, and began to preach as usual to the people, many gathering about her to hear the Gospel for the first time. She became so interested that she forgot her hunger un-

til a woman asked her what she was going to eat. She said she did not know. The woman then asked if she might bring her food, and went away, soon returning bringing her a delicious plate of curry and rice, with curd and some native sweets. Chundra Lela thanked God for so bountifully supplying her wants, and after eating, lay down and slept sweetly, and arose next morning well and strong for the work of another day. She returned to Midnapore to help Dr. Phillips in his work in the district.

As she was starting out on a preaching tour the Doctor said to her: "I am afraid for you to go thus, without any money for food. When you were a Brahmin priestess, then the people would feed you; but now they may not do it, and you will suffer. Suppose you take a bag of books with you, and sell them, and live on the money." She agreed to it, although not without some apprehensions.

Taking the bag of books she started on her journey. She sold a few; but when

she came into the crowded bazaar, and began to preach, she again became so interested in the people and the message she was delivering that she forgot her books, and they were stolen. When she returned she went to Dr. Phillips, and, giving him the empty bag and telling him what had happened, said: "Sahib, I cannot attend to worldly business. My only business is to preach the Gospel." It would be well if other ambassadors of Christ had their commission as clearly settled as had Chundra Lela.

After that, her friends insisted on her carrying a little money for her food in case of necessity. The Lord laid it on her heart to visit every village in the Midnapore District, and to preach Christ in every house in each village; so, if possible, to reach every soul in the district with the Gospel. Thus she went praying and preaching all over the country, it requiring six months for her to complete this tour. Some who heard became Christians—a number of whom

were afterwards cast off by their own people. Chundra Lela took them in, and cared for them until they got a start for themselves. Would to God we had a host of such workers! We need those who are willing to go from house to house, reaching the people next to them who have not heard the Gospel. Such work is not so romantic as running to distant places where the missionary has not been, thinking that when each nation has been touched, then Christ will come. But some have understood Jesus to say, "Go to every creature," and that He means every individual. Such are willing to do the hand-to-hand, every-day work, which every true missionary will find plenty of everywhere, down among the millions who know not God. Oh that the Lord of the harvest would multiply such workers a thousandfold! There is no trouble in finding appointments for such people.

A brother's son came to see Chundra Lela some time after this, and she began

to teach him about Jesus, and to pray for his conversion. It was not long until he accepted Christ, and wished to be baptized; but, being under age, the missionaries sent him back to his people. Shortly after this he died; but Chundra Lela believed he was saved.

She worked with the missionaries in different districts, as she had with Dr. Phillips in Midnapore, they all feeling she was a power in the work; but she felt the call to other people, and was soon planning another Christian crusade.

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# IX

## BAPTIZES HER OWN BROTHER

This time Chundra Lela began a pilgrimage lasting several years, going over the old tramping-ground from shrine to shrine, and *mela* to *mela;* but this time happy in Jesus, rejoicing in the privilege of telling her people of the wonderful Saviour she had found. She also wore her clean, neat, white native dress, with her body clean and well fed.

At the *mela* in Allahabad, where thousands and thousands come every year, she spent the month preaching. The Hindu priests became so enraged as she exposed their deception before the people, that they threatened to beat her, and did hire a mob to attack her. When they came she was sitting on the ground, preaching to the throng about her. She

spoke to the leader in such a brave, quiet way, asking them why they stoned their friend, the one who was warning them of danger ahead? When they took up stones to throw at her she said: "Throw them if you will, but you will hurt yourselves instead of me. I do not wish God to punish you." In some way she was able to control them by kind words and her fearless manner, so that not one would hurt her, but went away, leaving her to finish her discourse.

She went to most of the leading shrines she had before visited, all through Assam and Sylhet, visiting the very queen who had been so kind to her when she was a fakir. In her palace she read the Bible and preached Jesus. The queen's son was wonderfully impressed. As he recognized the same face, in spite of the change, he said: "When we saw you last you were sitting on the ground with five fires burning around you, worshipping idols all the time. Now you come with another book, and tell us you have

found the Saviour. Tell us what has caused this change."

She told them how disappointed she had been when she had searched to the bottom of Hinduism and found nothing; and how, through faith in Jesus, she had found salvation and peace. Many listened and believed, but were not willing to pay the cost and come out and confess Christ.

She went to her own land, Nepal, after an absence of twenty-seven years, and in that nation, whose doors are shut to the Christian missionary, she preached Christ wherever she went. She attended the Barachata *mela*, a religious gathering attended by people from all parts of Nepal. She here preached to every one she met, and gave out portions of the Bible and Christian tracts to the people, who carried them with them all over the land. While doing this, she was arrested by the police and taken up before the magistrate for distributing Christian literature. The magistrate asked her who she was, and

she told him she was a Nepalese, and was only giving good books to her own people. He gave her permission to give them to her own friends, and released her without punishment. She went back into the bazaar and continued preaching without molestation until the *mela* was over.

She visited her own people, and found her brother, who had visited her at Midnapore, very ill. She stayed with him some time, caring for him and nursing him as tenderly as a mother would her child. One day he called her to him, and said: "Sister, I believe in Jesus, and have been trying to serve Him ever since the teaching I had when I went to see you. Do you think He will receive and save me?"

"Certainly, brother; that is just what He died to do," said Chundra Lela.

"You think He will?" he said earnestly. "I had intended to take my family and go to Midnapore, and come out openly and be baptized and live with

A BIBLE CART IN INDIA.

Christian people; but I fear now I will never live to do that. I feel my days are few, but I wish to die a Christian; and you think Jesus will receive me anyway?"

"Yes, brother; I know He will receive you *now*. Do you give your soul and body to Him?"

"Yes, I do; and I believe Jesus does save me. Oh, I wish I could be baptized!"

"But there are no Padre Sahibs here, brother; no, not one in all our land," said Chundra Lela, yearningly, "and how could I bring one so far?"

"You could not," said the dying man; "for there would not be time. But, Lela, you are a Christian, and you preach the Gospel. Why could *you* not baptize me? I do want to die a Christian."

Chundra Lela thought a moment, and then looked into the face of her beloved brother, for whom she had so long prayed, and then said: "Surely God would not be angry with me for doing such a thing.

When I have performed all kinds of official and priestly services before heathen gods, I surely can do this for Him." She quietly left the room, and returned, bearing in her hand a brass bowl of water. Placing it on the ground, she reverently knelt by her brother's bedside, and pouring out a heartfelt prayer to God, who had so wonderfully led and saved her, and had now answered her prayer in the salvation of her brother, she asked Him to bless the water she was about to use, and to fill her brother with the Holy Spirit. She then, still kneeling, took the water, and dipping it with her hand, poured it upon the head of her brother, saying: "My brother, I baptize you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." She bowed her head in silence, and it seems to me that during that solemn ceremony the angels, and the Saviour Himself, must have hovered over that couch, and filled that room, away there in the centre of that heathen nation, with the glory of heaven.

As she rose, a sweet smile of peace had settled upon her brother's face, who was now no longer a heathen, but a Christian. A few days later the angels made another visit to that room, and carried her brother away with them, home.

His heathen friends prepared at once to burn his body, as is their custom; but Chundra Lela had been asking God to grant her the privilege of seeing her brother buried as a Christian. She pleaded with her friends without avail. They said: "You need not think, because you are a Christian, we are to do like you." "But," she pleaded, "my brother was a Christian, and died a Christian"; telling them what had transpired —he, himself, having testified to the same before his death. Still they would not heed her pleading. She still prayed, holding on to God to grant her this one more boon.

It was in the rainy season, and had been wet, but now the rain began to pour in torrents. The body was prepared and

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carried to the burning ghat; Chundra Lela following, pleading still with God not to let them burn her brother. The funeral pyre was surrounded with water, and still it rained. They placed the body on the pyre, and attempted to light the wood, but could not. Again and again they attempted to fire the wood, but without avail. The rain still poured, and the water rose higher and higher about the wood. As it grew towards night, Chundra Lela stepped forward and said: "My friends, do you not see our God does not intend to let you burn one of His children as a Hindu. He has heard my prayer, and sent this rain to prevent you. Desist, and grant me this beloved body, before God, in some dreadful way, prevents you." They yielded, and followed Chundra Lela as she had the body borne away, and the grave dug, and her brother buried as a Christian.

BURNING THE DEAD

# X

## SHOULD WOMEN PREACH?

When Chundra Lela first came to our home two years ago a stranger, at least once in our lives we entertained an angel "unawares." Her face first impressed us, and then her calm, unruffled spirit. Soon we saw her devotion in God's work; not waiting for others, but going every day, from early morn till late in the evening, preaching everywhere.

One day she would be found sitting at the feet of a native princess, reading the Bible to her and the women of the palace; another day in the bazaar, preaching to the throngs that come and go. At other times we have seen her come quietly into a room filled with educated native gentlemen, and seating herself in her favorite position on the floor (see frontispiece), began to talk to them. At first

they are inclined to ridicule her; but she goes on, until soon they forget she is a woman, and are astonished at her knowledge of their own sacred books, of which she is able to repeat, from memory, page after page. Soon they feel her superiority, and one after another, in their intense interest, draw nearer and take their seat on the ground before her. She will hold them for hours, telling them of their own religion and its emptiness. She then presents Jesus in such a way that it seems to make them want to know Him. She preaches in four different languages. Her simple habits, her forgetfulness of self, her intense interest in others, and her great faith in God—are traits of character which seldom blend in one person, and make her life beautiful. She is now about sixty-five years of age, and begins to grow feeble and her eyesight dim; but she still travels forty and fifty miles distant to preach, holding meetings in different parts, working and praying for the salvation of the people. The numbers

THREE BIBLE WOMEN

who have been led to Christ by her will never be known until she receives her crown.

Not long since she was out in the district with some missionary ladies and Bible-women. A large throng had gathered. Chundra Lela had been preaching, and giving some of her strong arguments in favor of Christianity, when one of the missionaries said to the head man: "How can you answer such truths as these?"

"Oh," said the Hindu, "these women know nothing. Wait till you hear the wisdom of our priest," and he went away to call a man, who came in his Brahmin garb and took his place among the people in great dignity. As he began to speak, Chundra Lela recognized in him one of her old disciples, and after greeting him pleasantly, said to the people: "All this man knows I taught him, for it was I who gave him his *Mantres* [taught him to repeat prayers to the gods, teaching him the Vedas, and giving

him the right to perform priestly ceremonies]." She then explained to them how false she had found all these things to be, and how real and blessed were the teachings of Christianity. This made a great impression upon all who heard.

Chundra Lela for thirty years has thus been preaching the Gospel all over this dark land, to congregations immense and small; and, too, while great assemblies of wise men are spending days discussing the important question whether women should be allowed to preach or not; and some are even hesitating about it being the proper thing for her to pray in public. The press and the pulpit, with bodies of reverend gentlemen, and great bishops of the Church, have been agitated to white heat over the momentous question whether women shall, or shall not, be allowed to sit with them in General Conference.

While the propriety of these things is being discussed and legislated upon, Chundra Lela goes on reaching the thou-

sands of both educated and ignorant, of high and low, of men and women who are thrilled and held for hours spell-bound by her spiritual power; she pouring forth the life-giving words in such a way as the most reverend Doctor of Divinity might covet.

And so it will be to the end. Women really called of God and anointed for this work will go on doing it all the same, whether licensed by man or not. Such women little care whether they have a seat in the General Conference or not.

Would that our people in the dear homeland, instead of being so taken up with such trifling things, were more concerned about how to reach these millions of unsaved souls!

Would that more were willing to sacrifice, or suffer, if need be, that the Gospel might reach these hungry ones! Oh, "the diamonds in the rough" all about us, even like Chundra Lela, in the offensive and disgusting garb of the fakir whom we see sitting in his filth and ashes!

Who will help gather them out of this great mining field?

If our friends at home could only see them swarming like bees, groping about in the darkness, with no one to teach them, none to care for their souls, oh, I am sure, hearts would be stirred as never before, and God's children would say, "Here, Lord, am I to go myself, or to send my substitute?"

The horrors of the famine, the devastation of the plague, and the destruction of the earthquake, are written and talked of everywhere; but there is nothing so awful as these restless millions living and dying without God. Not only from home do we want the workers, but from this country.

Oh that the Lord would send into His harvest-field an army composed of such as Chundra Lela, saved themselves, and living to make Him known to the unsaved of their own people? Then would this desert soon blossom as the rose, and there would soon be ready to meet Jesus,

at His coming, a beautiful church from India—"For they shall be gathered out of all nations."

Hear Chundra Lela as she says, "All this I suffered to find God." What have we done to make Him known?

## XI

### A PILGRIMAGE IN HER OLD AGE

It is the week of prayer. Representatives from our native Christian community all over the city of Calcutta are gathered in the chapel to link their prayers with those of the Christian world. One, with the plainest white dress, and gray hair, with somewhat feeble step, enters and takes her seat, and is soon absorbed in the devotion of the hour. It is Chundra Lela. She has just arrived from the boat, out on another Christian pilgrimage —restless to go, yet not knowing where the Spirit would lead her. After the service is over, a fine-looking native gentleman approaches her, and after the usual Oriental salutation asks:

"Is this Chundra Lela?"

"Yes, my son, but I do not recognize you."

ONE OF THE MANY GHATS WHERE OUR BIBLE WOMEN WORK

"Do you remember being at the *Mag mela* at Allahabad about fourteen years ago?"

"Yes, I was there."

"Do you recall a hot discussion you had with a group of Brahmin priests one day, and how, being unable to defeat your arguments in favor of Christianity, they one after another went away? Do you remember a young Hindu lad coming up to you at the close and telling you of the unrest of his heart; and you said, 'Young man, if you wish to make a success of life in this world, and make sure of the life to come, forsake your false religion and become a true Christian'? I am that man. I never got rid of your last sentence. I determined that day to know Christ. For two years I beat about in the dark before I found Him. It seemed so hard to leave all for His sake. At last I came out and was baptized, and have been a Christian for twelve years. I am now a professor in the London Mission College of this city."

Chundra Lela rejoiced greatly. She had not seen his face since that day, and now a respectable, useful Christian man stands before her.

"In my village, forty miles from here," he continued, "all my people are Hindus. My father's house is still full of idols. Won't you go and tell them of their mistake, and how you found God? I have a fortnight's vacation; come with me, and we will try and save some of those dear to me."

Chundra Lela took it as from the Lord, and answered, "Yes, I will go. When can you start?"

"To-morrow morning."

"All right; I will be ready."

She went, and for two weeks testified day and night in that Hindu village where no missionary had ever been; warning them of the wrath to come, and pleading with them to accept Christ. His brother's wife, a widow, believed and was converted; and she and her children became candidates for baptism. His

LISTENING TO THE STREET PREACHER

mother and father were deeply convinced, but lacked the courage to confess Christ. They being a leading and most influential family in the village, there was much excitement over the stranger who lodged with them and preached such wonderful words all over the town. The Brahmin priests were stirred to white heat, and, being full of wrath, attacked Chundra Lela as she was preaching in the Bazaar. They called her a "beef-eating Christian," "an outcast." She answered:

"Do you say that only Christians eat beef? Do you not remember that it is written in the Hindu Shastras—your sacred books—that on one occasion the gods ordered the Brahmins to sacrifice bullocks?—this being the only offering which would appease the wrath of a certain deity, and enable them to escape his vengeance; and also commanded the Brahmins themselves to eat of the flesh; and it was done? So Brahmins have eaten beef, and are not defiled. Why may not Christians eat of it?"

They were defeated, and left amid the cheers of the people; and Chundra Lela continued her preaching without further interruption. She returned to our house to rest awhile full of her adventures. Lifting a blanket a missionary had given her—for it was cold weather, she said, "Just see how my friends trouble me. How can a travelling fakir be burdened with such a bundle?"

Her tact in meeting arguments against the Christian religion, and the spirit in which she receives the abuse of enraged opponents, is marvellous. A friend who met her at a *mela* told us he heard her preaching Christ with great power, and throngs of idolaters drew near to hear. One of the priests, being angry, called out, "I will beat your Christ with my cane!" She answered mildly, "You may beat our Christ with a stick, but He will not break to pieces as will this idol of yours. You cannot destroy our God; He is not made of wood and stone."

Many are the recitals of experiences

when on returning from such trips she turns in to rest awhile with us. One was about a family she has taught for years, and is now turning towards Christianity. The son is ready for baptism, but is waiting for his old father; for should he, the eldest son, become a Christian and leave the old man to die a Hindu, who would light his funeral pyre?—a duty belonging to this member of the family. Chundra Lela spent days with the old man, teaching and entreating him, but he, though convinced, has grown old in Hinduism. How can he at this age break the fetters of caste and endure the persecution which becoming a Christian will entail? It is hard for those of Christian nations to understand the sacrifice it means; and these secret disciples, not being able to take up the cross, can never know the peace salvation brings.

"What do you think, 'mem'?" said Chundra Lela one day, as she took her place on the floor at my feet, as was her habit; "what do you think? The

'sihiab logue' (the missionary gentlemen of the American Baptist Mission, of which she has always been a member) have built me a house to die in. When they first mentioned it to me I said, 'What! a house to die in? Do you know where I am to die? It might be in the train or on the river steamer; it might be in the distant jungle, or perhaps while preaching in the street. How will you gentlemen build me a place to die in?' 'Oh,' said they, 'it is true we do not know; but when you are ill, as you were a few months ago, or tired, and wish to rest awhile, it will be well for you to have a house of your own.' 'How you friends do trouble me. What would I do with a house? I wish to be free from care. Then, too, it would cost money to keep it up.' 'Very well; but we will give you a pension of a small amount monthly, and from this you could keep it in repair.' And I yielded.

"One day, after the Conference was over and we were back in Midnapore, the

missionaries said to me, 'Come and see the spot we have selected for your house —under these mango trees, where you will be nice and quiet.' 'What,' I said, 'away off in this field? Oh, no; if you will build me a house, build it on the roadside—close up—so that when I am too old and weak to walk I may crawl up to the door and preach to the people as they pass by.' And they granted my request. And now I can preach as long as I live."

Would God we all loved our calling as well. There would not be so many superannuated preachers and Christian workers, and many more would die at their post. Such workers God could afford to keep alive upon the earth—those whose meat and drink is to preach His Word. The Lord give us thousands of such for the harvest-field of India.

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## XII

### CONVERSION OF A LEPER GIRL

Those who live and work for others, and are themselves members of that great family, part in heaven and part on earth, and of which God is the Father, learn to realize the brotherhood of man as no other. How much alike we all are after all. The color of our faces may not be the same, but "A man's a man for a' that." Our bodies are akin, and are affected by disease and suffering alike. We have the same hopes and fears, heartaches and sorrows, and are prone to the same sins. We are all links of the one great chain—and God intended it so.

In this country of India there is no disease more dreadful than that of leprosy. No wonder it is used as a type of sin. Like sin, it begins almost unconsciously to the person. Seldom do peo-

KOOSHAM, NOW A TEACHER, TRAINED IN OUR SCHOOL

ple suddenly commit great crimes. First a slight step backward—a little sin; gradually the conscience hardens, and greater wrongs are done; and finally, when far away from God and completely in Satan's hands, the awful sin is committed. So with leprosy—first a slight indisposition, then a roughness of the skin or a small blotch, then the deadness of one finger to the first joint, then another and another, until it eats into the very vitals, and life is exterminated. Oh, the long, dreary process. Following in its train, like sin, are many woes. First, separation from others, expulsion from home, inactivity, loathsomeness, etc. Also, like sin, leprosy often can be hidden for years.

In a mission orphanage was a famine girl whom we called Liza. Her parents were Hindus. She remembers seeing her father carried out of the house when thought to be dying, and hurried off to the Ganges, that he might expire on its sacred banks. The friends watched for

awhile; still he did not die. Soon they became tired; then watchers were appointed, for the poor creature no longer ate nor drank, but must lie in the heat of the sun day by day, and in the dew or the rain of night, until Yama, the god of death, saw fit to call him. These watchers finally became tired—so long did life linger, until, all patience exhausted, one of them took the mud of the river, and, filling his mouth and nostrils, suffocated the poor sufferer. And was he not performing a holy rite, aiding the god Yama in his work of destruction? And was not his victim ready to go, for his feet were in the holy waters of the Ganges, and his last word was to mumble the name of the goddess, Mother Gunga?

Soon the famine took Liza's mother and every friend, and she, a little girl, alone in the world and a starving skeleton, was brought to the orphanage. There she was carefully taught, and came to womanhood, useful, bright, and happy.

It was her wedding-day. The mission

compound was full of guests; everybody in their cheeriest mood. Of course Liza did not know her intended husband. It was contrary to all rules of society for her to converse with a man before the marriage ceremony; but why need she fear? He had been highly recommended to the head missionary lady, and he was said to be a good man—a catechist—and all thought she was very fortunate, and would be very happy. And she tried to appear so now. The bridegroom came neatly and nicely dressed. Ah, if we could only know what lies underneath the coat! A beautiful exterior how often covers a heart black with sin! The evil spirit of crime often appears dressed as an angel of light. How short-sighted we are, and how often cruelly deceived! All were assembled, the ceremony finished, congratulations offered, and the innocent bride was led away to her new home.

In a few days she returns to the mission in dire distress, begging the missionary to deliver her from such a fate.

"Why, what has happened, Liza? is your husband a drunkard?" "Oh, no." "Is he unkind?" "No." "What then has happened?" "Oh! my husband is a leper. Just think, tied forever to a leper!" And the usually happy girl sobbed aloud. Yes; there was the awful white spot on his breast, which he had been able to hide for years. But, as with sin, it is out now. "Be sure your sin will find you out." But ah! as in this case of leprosy it is out—but not till many innocent hearts are broken, and a chain of sinful causes set to work which will never end through all eternity. The girl was taken into the mission, and being a Christian was not compelled to live with him longer, as she would have had to do had she been a Hindu. The unhappy man went away to spend his few lingering years of misery alone. Her child was born and still remains untainted; but oh! the dread of what the future may unfold hangs over the mother and child, like an avalanche, ready to

BOYS' ORPHANAGE, BENGALI MISSION

fall upon them at any moment. Thank God, if there is no cure for leprosy, there is for sin, cleansing in the blood of Jesus. And the consequences we can only leave with a merciful over-ruling God.

A girl born in the dark land of India, in a little home among the mango topes and palm trees of beautiful Bengal, was, as all children are, the joy of her mother's heart. Although a girl, she had become very dear to her simple-hearted father. A school was opened for girls in the neighborhood, which created quite a stir among the people. Some said it was possible for even girls to learn to read and write, and "if our neighbors' girls can, so can our daughter," the parents said; and some plan must be devised for her to attend school. The way opened, and she soon became an interesting pupil. Her progress was encouraging. She was delighted with the prospect of one day being able herself to teach, and thus earn her own living, and be looked up to by

all. But ah! how fickle all human hopes! Her body became feverish, her blood heated; soon after a small spot appeared on her body and daily increased in size. Dread took possession of her heart! Sad forebodings haunted her friends! Could it be? this one so successful in school, just in sight of the coveted goal, loving and being loved by all, to be one most loathed by all? Could it be that all cherished hopes were blighted forever?

She was taken to a physician. After careful examination, during which all stood in breathless expectation, dreading to hear what they already knew—the doctor's face became sad. He tried to hide his feelings, but he must be true. "Yes," he said, "your child is a leper." The girl trembled with emotion. "What," she said, "and can I no longer stay in school? Is there no hope of it being something else?" And the girl wept as though her heart would break. Another doctor, a specialist, was consulted. The

verdict was—and it sounded like her death-warrant—"Leprosy of the worst type. Segregation must be insisted upon; marriage forbidden." The girl left his presence broken-hearted, every hope gone.

In a few weeks she was sent to the leper asylum, there to spend the remainder of her days in suffering untold, mingling with other loathsome creatures like herself. She wept day and night. How could she ever be reconciled to such a life? Everything so dark and hopeless! Even the kindness of the missionary brings no comfort. She sits by herself gloomy and sad, and wonders if there is a God, after all.

Hark! what is that which breaks on her ears? It sounds like the school-gong of former days. What can it mean? Then a crier went about beating a drum and saying, "Come out into the commons; a woman is preaching the words of Christ. Come." It was sunset. A large throng was gathering. She, too, went and stood on the outskirts of the crowd. In the

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centre was the feeble, gray-haired preacher, but whose voice soon took on supernatural strength, and her face was fired with the light of God's Holy Spirit. It was Chundra Lela. She was telling the people of a Saviour who could save from all sin, and bring joy and comfort to any heart. Soon after, the old servant of God found the sad leper girl, and set her heart upon leading her to Christ. She remained with her, working day and night for this soul until the girl yielded, gave her heart to Jesus, and He came to live within her, bringing light and joy and peace forever.

What a change! With her eyes no longer on earth, the poor leper girl saw only a few months or years of suffering and isolation, and then home and heaven. She now, by faith, lived in the land where no disappointments ever come; where no pain, sorrow, or death can ever enter. Yes, how happy now the face which may be seen passing in and out among the other lepers, telling them of a

brighter day, of the beautiful country beyond, cheering and comforting all. And Chundra Lela has another star in her crown, brighter than all the rest.

## XIII

### THE PASSING OF CHUNDRA LELA

LIKE some great and noble souls, who are too big to belong to one denomination, or even to one country, but are owned by the whole, so it was with Chundra Lela. She went all over the country, preaching and working side by side with missionaries of any and all denominations. She never stopped to ask if it was within the bounds of her own mission field or with workers of her own Church. Hers was the *one* Church, and all India was her parish.

As age increased, her pilgrimages became shorter and less frequent. She, however, became known and appreciated as never before, and beloved and honored by all true workers who knew her. A number of friends had asked for the privilege of meeting her when she should

again stop to rest with us. The opportunity came, and although the dear old saint was feeble, we arranged an "at home" in her honor. The missionaries, both Indian and European, of all denominations in the city came, and others from outside.

The room was full when she entered. Gentlemen rose and offered her their chairs, but with a cordial greeting she said in Bengali, "Gentlemen, kindly allow me to sit in my own native style; I will feel more at home." With this, she seated herself on the floor in the centre of the missionary circle. I heard numbers of them reminding her of the time, years before, when she had worked with them on tours in the districts around Calcutta and at different *melas*.

Many were the pleasant reminiscences related, and all seemed anxious for a word with her and to show their appreciation of her work. I have attended many missionary farewells and gatherings to honor Christian workers, but this was unique,

and one of the most enthusiastic gatherings of the kind I ever witnessed. The evening closed by her giving a thrilling account of her last preaching tour. When she had finished speaking, a high caste, educated Indian lady slipped up, and seating herself on the floor beside her, told her of her struggle to give up all and come out and confess Christ, and how her courage had so often failed her. Chundra Lela, with a beaming face, slipped her arm about her, and drawing her to her breast in a loving embrace, assured her that the joy she would receive on accepting her Saviour would more than repay her for the sacrifice made. The lady went away strengthened for the undertaking, and Chundra Lela was again used of God as no "white face" could ever have been.

The meeting closed by missionaries of all creeds joining in prayer and praise for such a life spent for Christ among us, and in asking great blessing upon her in her declining years.

I remember accompanying her to a meeting once, when she was so feeble she could hardly walk. A number of Indian students and others had been invited, and it was a gathering in which a number of secret disciples had been expected. As Chundra Lela seated herself in their midst, I wondered if it would be possible for her to be heard, and doubted her ability to accomplish anything, so weak she seemed. But she reminded me of an old war-horse which starts up with new strength at the sound of the bugle. Her voice became strong, commanding attention, and she was soon using convincing arguments to prove that God was the true God, and His Son the only Saviour. All felt that the old power was upon her again, and that she still brought forth fruit in old age.

Months of weakness followed ere "the silver cord was loosed or the golden bowl broken." But the time came, as it must with us all. Faithful watchers were about her bed. The old pilgrim's jour-

neyings are over. The afterglow lights up the face as she says, "See! four shining ones have come to bear me home." And the voice, which had held spellbound the throngs and faithfully proclaimed the true Saviour for so many years, was hushed on earth—to burst forth in praise and adoration within the portals of the "Ivory Palace," where she "sees the King in His beauty, and beholds the land of far distances."

As the remains of Chundra Lela are laid to rest, a Mohammedan man even joins in the eulogies, saying, "Ah! a good woman has gone!"

This strange, sad land of India needs just such strong characters as Chundra Lela; those who know their sacred books, who have felt the galling chain of caste and superstition; those who have tried all Hinduism has to offer, but to no avail; those who have found the Saviour and tasted His saving power; sons and daughters of the soil, filled with God's Spirit and a longing to make Him

known to others. God is calling for a host of such, and by them He will save the millions of India. India must be saved by her own people, if she is ever saved at all. They are here hid away in Hinduism—perhaps on the famine field, in distant villages, or in the accessible cities, among the devotees or those measuring their length to yon distant shrine. Where, God knows, and He wants His servants to go and find them.

Are we "dwelling with the King for His work"? Hear Chundra Lela say again: "All this I suffered to find God!" Think what the Son of God suffered when He went all the way to Calvary to find you and me. What have we done to make Him known?

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3).

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# Glossary

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Anna = One Penny . . . . . 62
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Choories, bangles for the wrists . . . . . 53
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Doty, a cloth worn about the loins . . . . . 46, 66
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